

Army Denies Spying Charge

No Illinois Solon Under Investigation—Resor

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WASHINGTON (AP) — The Army strongly denied Thursday ever spying on Illinois members of Congress, saying such allegations "are without foundation in fact."

Secretary of the Army Stanley R. Resor said that after a preliminary check "I can state that neither Sen. Stevenson, Rep. Mikva nor former Gov. Kerner are or ever have been the subject of military intelligence activities or investigations related to political activities."

The denial came in response to charges made Wednesday by Sen. Sam J. Ervin, Jr., D-N.C., that Army agents collected intelligence information on Sen. Adlai Stevenson III, former Illinois Gov. Otto Kerner, now a federal judge, and Rep. Abner Mikva. All three are Democrats.

There were reports by a former Army intelligence agent that the military also gathered data on several other Illinois political figures, but Resor's statement was limited to Stevenson, Mikva and Kerner.

Pentagon spokesman Jerry W. Friedheim said allegations concerning other individuals would have to be checked out separately.

Resor declared that had any of the alleged intelligence gathering activities been carried out, they would have been in violation of Army policies.

The Defense Department and the Army are "gravely concerned about the allegations," Resor said.

The White House issued a statement opposing domestic spying and presidential press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said "It will not be done under this administration."

Asked if President Nixon had ordered such activities to stop, Ziegler replied "For me to answer that would suggest that it is going on. I would refer you to what the secretary of defense has said—it is not going on in any way at this time."

Ziegler said Nixon had taken

action "from the standpoint of expressing his point of view about it and making sure that this is absolutely not occurring and absolutely will not occur under his administration."

MEMO DROPPED

In the wake of Ervin's statement, it was learned that the Defense Department recently rescinded a memorandum telling military intelligence agents how to spot potential subversion at an Air Force base in Texas. It ordered the rules revised and then reissued them, but since has dropped the directive entirely.

Resor said his denial that the Illinois men had been subject to surveillance was made on the basis of preliminary reports and said the investigation is continuing.

In a statement Wednesday, Army general counsel Robert E. Jordan III said current Army policy specifically bars collection of domestic intelligence gathering activities alleged by Ervin.

With regard to Kerner, Resor said, the Army conducted a background investigation in connection with his military duties but the last entry in his file was made in 1952. Kerner was an officer in the National Guard and this type of investigation was routine, Resor said.

CONCERN EXPRESSED

"I want to reaffirm the Army's desire to continue its full cooperation with Sen. Ervin and other members of Congress who share my concern that there must be no abuses whatsoever of military intelligence responsibilities," Resor said in his statement read to newsmen by Friedheim.

After Ervin's statement, The Associated Press obtained documents tracing the Air Force's and Navy's broad but little-known "investigative and reporting requirements relating to

civil disturbances and dissident or subversive activities..."

A more precise picture of what Air Force agents were told to look for is disclosed in a memorandum dated May 25, 1970, from Col. Jack January Jr. at Sheppard Air Force Base, Wichita Falls, Tex.

Headed "Reporting Subversive Activities," the memo noted that the possibility of base activities being disrupted by demonstrators was remote. But to be prepared, commanders were told to "brief their personnel to report any of the following activities to their supervisor."

ACTIVITIES OUTLINED

The 10 specific activities outlined in the memo included:

— "Persons attempting to spread antiwar sentiments in public places on Sheppard Air Force Base."

— "Personnel making sympathetic statements — support of the antiwar demonstrators."

— "Persons making statements with racial overtones."

— "Personnel having indebtedness being approached with offers of financial aid."

— "Congregation of unauthorized persons."

Ervin, a long-time crusader against invasion of privacy, obtained a copy of the memo and asked Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird last July 20 if such guidelines were in widespread use and what was done with the material collected at Sheppard.

Robert C. Moot, assistant secretary of defense, responded that the memorandum "has been rescinded and rewritten in an effort to remove any objectionable features."

The revised memorandum, dated Aug. 7, 1970, listed nine reportable activities. Dropped was the reference to personnel being sympathetic with antiwar demonstrators.